



Results for Spring 2004 Employee Survey

Introduction

To gauge DAS employee opinions about their work experience, we sent a two-page survey in February 2004 through the regular DAS employee newsletter. The results provide information about levels of employee satisfaction and guidance for benchmarking improvements.

Results and Analysis

The survey included 40 questions, and asked employees to identify their work unit. The main survey section asked respondents to rank their rating of importance and level of satisfaction with each of 18 survey statements. Respondents were invited to acknowledge good customer service from other staff members, complain, or comment on any topic.

To facilitate analysis, we categorized survey questions into six construct categories representing various DAS work characteristics, and scored each both for its importance to employees and performance. The six constructs were:

- Leadership and communication
- Pride and commitment
- Teamwork
- Performance enablement
- Performance management
- Rewards and recognition

Multiple solicitations over a period of several weeks generated 134 responses from 386 employees, a 35 per cent rate. The low rate means it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions.

In general, however, the data suggests that DAS employees appear relatively satisfied with DAS in the construct category termed “performance management”--employee accountability for decisions and actions, supervisory feedback, and managing disagreements. They believe DAS needs to improve in leadership and communication, rewards and recognition, and performance enablement. Employees are in greater agreement about the importance of survey items than on how well DAS is doing in those areas.

Table 1 compares Importance Ratings to Satisfaction Ratings for each of the 18 survey statements. A positive numerical difference indicates that staff are less satisfied with a workplace construct which has relatively more importance to them. Negative values indicate relatively higher satisfaction with a less important construct. The closer a value is to zero, the greater the agreement between a respondent's rating and priority for a given statement.

Table 1. Importance Ratings and Satisfaction Ratings (Rating Scale 1 to 6; 6 = High)

Statement	Construct	Importance Rating (Average)	Satisfaction Rating (Average)	Importance vs. Satisfaction (Difference)
We all work together with all members doing their part	Teamwork	5.26	3.64	1.62
There is timely and accurate communications of information that impacts me	Leadership and Communication	5.20	3.59	1.61
Customer can rely on DAS to deliver outstanding quality, service and value	Pride and Commitment	5.45	3.94	1.51
Others are held accountable for their decisions and actions	Performance Management	5.14	3.65	1.49
Disagreements are dealt with directly and fairly	Performance Management	5.11	3.70	1.41
DAS goals, strategies and priorities are clearly communicated	Leadership and Communication	5.02	3.63	1.39
People are recognized and appreciated for jobs/work well done	Rewards and Recognition	5.19	3.82	1.37
I have influence in decisions that other people make that impact me	Performance Enablement	5.00	3.63	1.37
I received the appropriate training to accomplish my assigned task	Performance Enablement	5.38	4.06	1.32
My overall level of satisfaction with the DAS work environment	Pride and Commitment	5.19	3.89	1.30
I received the proper tools and equipment to get my job done correctly	Performance Enablement	5.37	4.09	1.28
GSE is committed to delivering outstanding Customer Service	Pride and Commitment	5.39	4.13	1.26
My Enterprise's goals, strategies and priorities are clearly communicated	Leadership and Communication	5.14	3.96	1.18
I understand my specific role and job responsibilities, and how my work fits into the big picture	Leadership and Communication	5.44	4.33	1.11
Co-workers meet commitments they have made to me	Teamwork	5.20	4.13	1.07
I am proud to work for DAS	Pride and Commitment	5.27	4.40	0.87
Feedback from your supervisor is clear and specific, not judgmental or vindictive	Performance Management	5.46	4.64	0.82
I am held accountable for my decisions and actions	Performance Management	5.25	4.67	0.58

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Table 2 summarizes response rates by DAS Enterprise and as a part of total DAS employees. Note that eight responses are not included in this tabulation because their enterprises could not be identified.

Table 2: Response Counts by DAS Enterprise

Enterprise	Employee Count	Response Count	Response Percent
General Services	158	62	46.3%
Information Technology	119	24	17.9%
Human Resources	51	11	8.2%
State Accounting	24	5	3.7%
DAS Core	34	24	17.9%
Total	386	126	

Employee Comments

The three open-ended survey questions generated a total of one hundred eighty two comments.

Forty-four of those responses were to acknowledge DAS employees who provide excellent Customer Service. Many of these positive comments were posted on the DAS Wall of Fame at the July 16 All Employee Meeting.

The remaining 138 comments were in response to the questions “describe a complaint you want DAS to address” and “add any overall comments about the DAS work environment and your satisfaction level.” Comments were grouped as follows:

- Management (29 responses)
- Staffing issues and work tools (24 responses)
- Communication and recognition (22 responses)
- Facilities (24 responses)
- Working environment (39 responses)

Management-related comments included ineffective hiring practices, lack of skills acknowledgement of current employees, and managers not listening, not responding, not addressing issues and not willing to make decisions. There were also concerns about the high cost of staff contributing to overhead, fragile financial conditions in DAS, lack of disciplined project management, too much chaos and poor leadership.

Many responses indicated staff shortages, a need for new and sufficient equipment (from vacuum cleaners to computers) to perform job duties, an observation about inconsistent job classifications, and a desire for more job training. Some comments expressed very high job satisfaction and a desire to remain focused on satisfying DAS customers.

Responses about communication indicate a need for better communication within work units, across divisions, and within DAS to remove the “silo” effect. There is a need for two-way communication to promote both input and feedback, and for accurate and timely communication to prevent rumors. The DAS newsletter is informative, but not all employees have computers to receive electronic communication. Recognizing and acknowledging employees for doing a good job would be a positive step.

Comments regarding facilities indicate a need for consistent lighting (some areas are adequate, some are not), improved summer cooling in Hoover B level, and a cleaner building environment in which maintenance is done in a timely manner. In addition, better lighting is needed in the

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parking lot; more signs should be installed in the tunnel and on the complex to assist state employees and visitors alike and better enforcement of smoking rules would prevent smoking in the non-smoking areas.

Responses relating to the working environment were generally very positive. Although a few respondents expressed dissatisfaction, most comments indicated employees are satisfied with the DAS workplace. Suggestions for improvement were in the areas of better communication, reduction in the number of meetings in some cases and an increase in others, improved leadership and management, and improved morale.

Summary and Recommendations

The first DAS all-employee survey was the new DAS's first effort to solicit employee input after only a few months of operation. Despite multiple solicitations, the response rate was low. Responses reflected diverse opinions on how things were going; many positive and negative comments were received.

Based on our experience, we make the following suggestions for the 2005 survey:

- Consider focus groups to elicit areas of interest.
- Use an electronic document where possible to simplify tabulation and analysis.
- Make paper documents available for employees who do not have computer access.
- Ask managers and supervisors to encourage employee participation.
- Post results promptly.
- Use this study as a benchmark in developing a Year 2 document.